

REMARKS:

AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIFICATION

Applicant has amended the specification to recite “gripping portion” in place of “gripping means” for clarification. No new matter has been added.

DISPOSITION OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-3, 5-8, 10-13, 15-17 are pending in the present application. Applicant has amended claims 1, 6, and 11 to incorporate the subject matter of claims 4, 9, and 14 respectively, which are now canceled. New claims 16 and 17 have been added. Support for the new claims can be found in the present set of figures 4-6 as well as generally throughout the application. Numbers from the figures have been included in the claims as an aid to reference at least one of the embodiments disclosed in the application and are not limiting. No new matter has been added.

IN RESPONSE TO THE OFFICE ACTION:

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112:

According to the Examiner in claims 1 and 11 applicant appears to be evoking 35 U.S.C. §112, sixth paragraph which states

An element in a claim for a combination may be expressed as a means or step for performing a specified function without the recital of structure, material, or acts in support thereof, and such claim shall be construed to cover the corresponding structure, material, or acts described in the specification and equivalents thereof.

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Applicants have amended claims 1 and 11 to recite “gripping portion” in place of “gripping means” for clarification. Accordingly the above mentioned rejection is no longer applicable, and favorable action is solicited.

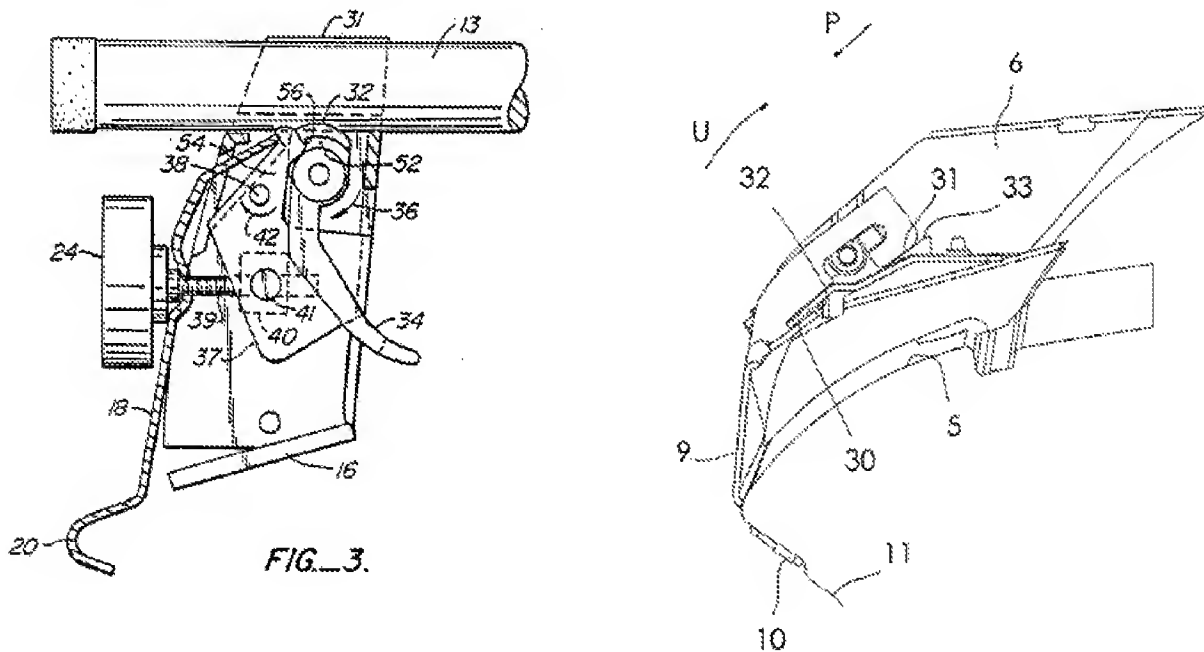
REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103(a):

Claims 1-3, 5-8, 10-13, and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Grim** (U.S. 4,877,169). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claims 4, 9, and 14 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Applicant has amended the independent claims 1, 6, and 11 to incorporate the subject matter of claims 4, 9 and 14 respectively. Therefore, as claims 4, 9 and 14 are effectively rewritten in independent form, Applicant respectfully asserts such claims are in allowable condition.

Applicant has also added new claims 16 and 17 which Applicant respectfully asserts are also not disclosed by **Grim** and are in allowable form. This can be seen more clearly with reference to the Figure 3 of **Grim** as well as the Figures 5 and 6 of the present application.

Fig 5



As can be seen with reference to the above figures, the Grim reference does not disclose “an inboard contact face 31 slidably abutting the inboard ramped surface 33 in face-to-face engagement therewith” as recited in new claim 16. Also, Grim does not disclose “the inboard contact face 31 and the inboard ramped surface 33 being configured so that in the secured configuration the clamping plate 9 is restrained against pivotation relative the foot part 6” as

recited in new claim 16. Accordingly, for at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully asserts claims 16-17 are in allowable condition.

Furthermore, Grim does not disclose “outboard contact face 22 and the outboard ramped surface 30 being configured so that in the secured configuration the clamping plate 9 is restrained against pivotation relative the foot part 6” as recite in new claim 17. For at least this reason also Applicant respectfully asserts claim 17 as in allowable condition.

Applicant has made an earnest attempt to respond to all the points included in the Office Action and, in view of the above, submits that the requirement and burden of presenting of a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 USC §103 have not been satisfied. Consequently, request is respectfully made for reconsideration of the application and notification of allowance of claims 1-3, 5-8, 10-17 in the next paper from the Office.

The undersigned representative requests any extension of time that may be deemed necessary to further the prosecution of this application.

The undersigned representative authorizes the Commissioner to charge any additional fees under 37 C.F.R. 1.16 or 1.17 that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 14-1437, referencing Attorney Docket No.: 7298.143.PCUS00.

In order to facilitate the resolution of any issues or questions presented by this paper, the Examiner may directly contact the undersigned by phone to further the discussion.

Respectfully submitted,
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